



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 158

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JULY 11, 2012

No. 103

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 17, 2012, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

GASODUCTO

The SPEAKER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, we've all seen bad horror movies, the ones where every time you think it's safe to relax and take a deep breath, the monster is right behind the door. You know the drill. No matter how hard the teenagers in the basement or the swimmers in the lake or the hikers in the wood try to get away, the creature just can't be stopped.

Well, the people of Puerto Rico are stuck in their very own horror movie, one that just won't end, and one with a villain that just won't go away, except the villain isn't a guy wearing a hockey mask or carrying a chain saw. The villain is a bunch of government insiders, and the horror story is about their desire to build a huge gas pipeline.

It's a pipeline that the people of Puerto Rico don't want, that experts have said that Puerto Rico doesn't need, and environmentalists have testified will destroy the natural beauty of thousands of acres on the island. And this might be the scariest part. It's a pipeline that Puerto Rico doesn't even have enough natural gas to operate.

The name of the pipeline is Gasoducto, and the horror story started in 2010. About all that has been missing from the script is bad music and vampires. The story has featured the Puerto Rican people's tax dollars, as much as \$100 million of them, paid to consultants and lobbyists hired by the government, including close friends and allies of the Governor and his ruling party.

It's featured the government hiring a consulting team of former high-ranking Army Corps of Engineer employees based in Florida. The consultants magically convinced the Army Corps to take review of the project away from the local San Juan, Puerto Rico, office. Where did they move it to? Surprise—to Florida, right down the road from where the consultants live and used to work.

It has featured ever-increasing cost estimates of the project, ballooning to nearly \$1 billion. It has featured huge protests and marches by the Puerto Rican people against the pipeline and public opinion polls showing three-quarters of the people strongly opposed to the project.

It has featured power supply experts who studied the government plan and noticed one important flaw. Just as Casa Pueblo, countless technical experts, environmentalists, scientists, and I have insisted to the Army Corps all along, the only current source of natural gas supply available for this project in Puerto Rico was too small for a pipeline to even work.

And finally, it even featured—after tens of millions of dollars spent—the Governor appointing his own commission to make recommendations about how Puerto Rico can make better use of natural gas to meet its energy needs.

The commission, appointed by the very Governor who dreamt up the Gasoducto plan, made three recommendations. None of them—I repeat—none of them included

Gasoducto. Not one. Actually, they discarded it and called it unviable.

Finally, the people of Puerto Rico thought the monster must be dead. Finally, we can stop sending tax dollars to connected government insiders, we can stop worrying about our environment, we can stop wondering where in the world the natural gas for a billion dollar pipeline will actually come from. But that's not how horror movies work.

Last week, the Governor was quoted in the press as saying Gasoducto was still alive. Why? Because the Governor of Puerto Rico claims that the Assistant Secretary of the Army, who oversees the Army Corps of Engineers, has asked him personally not to withdraw the Gasoducto application. Assistant Secretary Darcy wants him, the Governor, to wait a while before pulling the plug, which is already on life support for this monster.

Personally, I find this hard to believe. I don't know why an Assistant Secretary of the Army would want to keep a monster alive that is an unneeded, unwanted insider boondoggle that isn't even wanted by the regime that proposed it in the first place. But I've written to find out, is it true and how could this be?

I expect answers, just like I expect answers on my ongoing request to the Army about how the Army Corps of Engineers has handled this application and why the review was moved away from their employees in Puerto Rico and closer to a bunch of consultants who used to head their office in Florida.

When it comes to Gasoducto, enough is enough. Like in most bad monster movies, Gasoducto has been almost impossible to believe from the very first scene, a silly, unnecessary waste of time and money. It's time to roll the credits and declare this monster dead once and for all.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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IN MEMORY OF MAERSK
MCKINNEY MOLLER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FARENTHOLD). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to honor the legacy and achievements of one of the greatest friends America has ever known, Mr. Maersk McKinney Moller, who died recently at the age of 98 in his home country of Denmark. Mr. Moller, whom I've known personally for more than 2 decades, was a Dane and an American by virtue of his American mother, a loyal husband, a doting father, a brilliant businessman, and a leading figure in the development of the modern globalized marketplace.

I initially met Mr. Moller, Mr. Speaker, in his Copenhagen office. We spoke for 35 to 40 minutes, and it became apparent to me that I was in the presence of a truly great man.

Mr. Moller loved America. It is no coincidence that his company's U.S. flag business unit, Maersk Line, Limited, owns and operates the largest U.S. flag fleet of vessels serving our military today. In fact, these U.S. flag vessels employ more American mariners and have delivered more of the critical material to supply U.S. troops in the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts than any other carrier. And the same is true of humanitarian aid and every other category of government-impelled cargo carried by U.S. flag commercial vessels. Maersk McKinney Moller believed in the mission and basic goodness of America, and he demonstrated that belief throughout his life.

Mr. Moller, Mr. Speaker, was born in Denmark in 1913. He grew up in the shipping industry that his father, Arnold Peter Moller, had started in 1904. In 1940, after the occupation of Denmark by Nazi troops, all the company's vessels in international waters were ordered to neutral ports and a third of the fleet sought refuge in ports controlled by the United States.

□ 1010

Mr. Moller traveled to New York soon after the occupation and ran the operations from there through 1947.

Allied forces requisitioned the Maersk fleet and most were subsequently lost to German U-boats in the most devastating loss of merchant mariner life in history. At the conclusion of the war, Mr. Moller returned to Denmark and continued building a global business empire, becoming CEO of the group in 1965.

In 1991, Mr. Moller wrote a letter to then-U.S. Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney highlighting the longstanding connections between America and Maersk. Among other matters in the letter, Mr. Moller wrote:

Maersk is, and has always been, a strong advocate for uninhibited free trade and the principles of freedom consistently enunciated by the United States and Denmark. Our entire organization, and especially

Maersk Line, Limited will be ready to serve anytime should that be desired.

Mr. Moller stepped down as CEO in 1993, but remained chairman of the AP Moller Group until 2003. Even through the last few months of his life, however, Mr. Moller went to work every day, walking up five flights of stairs to his office.

Through his vision and leadership, Mr. Moller built the largest container shipping company in the world, but never abandoned his love and appreciation for the United States and its people. Over 70 years, he personally cultivated and sustained a valuable partnership with the United States, one that continues to support and advance our commercial and national security interests around the world.

Finally, Mr. Moller was a citizen of Denmark, indeed, the world; but he will always have a special place of respect, admiration, and appreciation from the people and the Government of the United States.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, in this time of extreme weather events, our hearts go out to victims of the storms, wildfires, power outages, torrential downpours, the winds, trees crashing into homes. It makes our hearts ache, thinking of the suffering of hundreds of thousands of people in sweltering heat without electricity.

Beyond our shores, we see this extreme weather is global in scale, such as the flash floods that killed hundreds in Russia this last week. We must pause, shudder, and feel sadness for those families.

For many, the instinct is to help people resettle, rebuild, and reconnect. But the Nation's elected leaders should do more than comfort those in distress and try to help people recover. As policymakers, shouldn't we act to try and prevent the next catastrophe?

Some of this is relatively simple and straightforward, even if potentially controversial. Don't relocate people right back in the same flame or flood zone. We know they'll be ravaged by fire and flood. At a minimum, we shouldn't have the Federal Government pay to put people right back in harm's way.

This discussion is part of flood insurance reform and national disaster policy that I personally have been working on for decades. We have made some progress, but not nearly what we should.

You would think we would stop making it worse, yet we allow more and more people to move into the flame zone seeking to live with nature, and these people then expect government to prevent nature from doing what it's done for eons. In most cases, the fires in these areas not only cannot be

stopped, but we make the next fire worse by suppressing nature's natural fire cycle until there's so much fuel in the forest that the inevitable next fire burns longer and more furiously, putting more at risk.

The more people who are permitted or even encouraged to build homes and live in an area that cannot be defended is a prescription for disaster. It's an example of political malpractice, a head-in-the-sand attitude that many today in this Chamber have regarding climate change, rising sea level and weather instability, which are all completely predictable, foreseen consequences of carbon pollution.

It's being played out in a variety of areas. We're watching oceans become more acidic, bleaching and killing coral reefs, which are the rain forests of the sea. Shouldn't we be doing something to try and prevent it?

On the land, it's becoming clear what warming will mean to our communities with more instability, hotter temperatures, heavier precipitation events, 23,383 all-time heat records set this year.

The worst example of government response, I think, is legislation in North Carolina, and it's already passed the State senate and is working its way through, that would prevent the State and local governments from planning based on the best scientific evidence about the accelerating pace of sea level increase.

In Congress, it's notable that one of our major parties has firm opposition to even using the words "climate change," let alone plan for or prevent it happening. It's not an energy policy to promote more carbon pollution and lavish support for old fossil fuel technology, nor to claim climate science is a hoax.

That's the mindset that puts at risk replacement of a vitally needed satellite providing climate data. With all the ominous signs, horrific events and high stakes, how can we, as policymakers, not at least give weight to the advice of the vast majority of scientists.

I'll tell you, this current generation of politicians will be asked by their grandchildren what could you possibly have been thinking. Indeed, I'll wager that some of today's policymakers, even the most obtuse and dogmatic, will live long enough to regret their hostility to science and their short-sighted devotion to politics of the moment over the future of the planet and their very families.

They are like King Canute, who ordered the tide not to come in until it washed over his feet. Unlike King Canute, today's policymakers could do something about it.

HEALTH TAX

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, several days ago I was one of only a handful of